

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AGR-05 AGRE-00 AID-05 IGA-02 OMB-01

EB-07 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 IO-13 SIL-01

LAB-04 /095 W

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R 211655Z SEP 76

FM AMEMBASSY KINGSTON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2493

C O N F I D E N T I A L KINGSTON 4049

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: AID, PFOR, JM, US

SUBJECT: INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION ACTIVITIES IN JAMAICA

REFERENCE: (A) KINGSTON 3824 (B) KINGSTON 3813 (C) KINGSTON 3812

1. SUMMARY. MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE HAS AGAIN ASKED USG TO ASSURE NO FURTHER IAF FUNDING OF SOCIAL ACTION CENTER BUT REQUESTS IAF FUNDING FOR A SIMILAR PROGRAM BEING SPONSORED BY GOJ AND OTHERS. CONCERN EXPRESSED BY THE MINISTER RELATIVE TO OTHER IAF ACTIVITIES AND ITS REPRESENTATIVES.

END SUMMARY.

2. REFTELS MADE CLEAR GOJ UNHAPPINESS WITH IAF FUNDING OF SOCIAL ACTION CENTER AND ALSO SUSPICIONS THAT FLOW FROM THAT FUNDING. SIMILARLY IT WAS REPORTED THAT GOJ MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE HAD REQUESTED ANY NEW GRANTS FOR SOCIAL ACTION CENTER BE BLOCKED.

3. AT REQUEST OF AGRICULTURE MINISTER BELINFANTI, DCM CALLED ON HIM AND KEY MEMBERS HIS STAFF MORNING SEPT 21 TO DISCUSS FOREGOING. BELINFANTI RESTATED ALMOST LITERALLY ALL OF THE SUSPICIONS AND CONCERNS EXPRESSED
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BY OTHER JAMAICANS AND REPORTED REFTELS. MOREOVER HE

CLAIMED THAT (A) SOCIAL ACTION CENTER AND SUGAR WORKERS COOPERATIVE COUNCIL HAD APPARENTLY BEEN USING IAF FUNDS TO SUPPORT CANDIDATES IN VARIOUS PARISH COUNCIL ELECTIONS, AND (B) IF THERE IS ONE THING JLP, PNP, BITU, AND NWU ARE UNIFIED ON, IT IS THEIR CONCERN FOR THE "IRRESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOR" OF THE SOCIAL ACTION CENTER VIS-A-VIS THE COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT.

4. BELINFANTI THEN SAID THAT THE COOPERATIVE MOVEMENT IS INDEED IMPORTANT AND REQUIRES ASSISTANCE AND THE GOJ WOULD VERY MUCH LIKE TO HAVE IAF SUPPORT FOR THE AUTONOMOUS "COOPERATIVES DEVELOPMENT CENTER" WHICH IS INTENDED TO BE A TRAINING CENTER FOR COOPERATIVES LEADERS WHICH WILL OPERATE ON A NON-POLITICAL BASIS WITH PARTICIPATION FROM ALL INTERESTED PARTIES, INCLUDING THE SOCIAL ACTION CENTER, NWU, BITU, ETC. HE SAID THAT THE PRIMARY REQUIREMENT TO GET THE CENTER OFF THE GROUND IS TRAINING STAFF, FUNDING, AND A CESSATION OF THE PRESENT SITUATION IN WHICH A NUMBER OF ORGANIZATIONS ARE WORKING AT CROSS PURPOSES OUT OF POLITICAL CONSIDERATIONS. HE CLAIMED THAT THE CENTER WILL HAVE A REGIONAL CHARACTER IN THAT IT WILL BE WORKING CLOSELY WITH SIMILAR CENTERS IN GUYANA AND TRINIDAD AND THAT THIS TRILATERAL APPROACH IS BEING GIVEN SOME SUPPORT BY ILO AND THE DANISH INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT AGENCY. SOME TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE ALSO HAS BEEN OFFERED BY ISRAEL.

6. HE DOES HOPE THAT OTHER IAF REPRESENTATIVES CAN COME DOWN AND WORK WITH HIM AND HIS MINISTRY TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE IAF MIGHT BE ABLE TO CONTRIBUTE TO THE COOPERATIVES DEVELOPMENT CENTER.

7. BELINFANTI, WHEN QUESTIONED ABOUT ATTITUDES OUTSIDE OF HIS MINISTRY TOWARDS THE IAF AND ITS OTHER PROJECTS, COMMENTED THERE IS A GENERAL CONCERN AT VERY HIGH LEVELS AND THE US GOVERNMENT WOULD BE WELL ADVISED TO NOT ONLY TAKE A SECOND LOOK AT ALL IAF ACTIVITIES BUT ALSO TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE NEW APPROACHES WITH "SOMEONE FROM THE PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE". HE SAID HE WAS PERSONALLY CONVINCED THAT IAF IS WELL MEANING BUT ITS

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REPRESENTATIVES HAVE BEEN EXTRAORDINARILY NAIVE WITH RESPECT TO THE PROJECTS AND CONTACTS THEY HAD ESTABLISHED IN JAMAICA.

8. DCM EXPLAINED THE AUTONOMOUS CHARACTER OF THE IAF, AND THE DIFFICULTIES INVOLVED IN INFLUENCING THAT ORGANIZATION. HE DID PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING ASSURANCES:

A. THE MINISTER'S CONCERNS AND REQUESTS WOULD BE
CONVEYED DIRECTLY TO THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE.

B. EVERY EFFORT WOULD BE MADE TO TURN OFF ANY FURTHER
FUNDING OF THE SOCIAL ACTION CENTER.

C. DCM WOULD BE BACK IN TOUCH WITH THE MINISTER ON THE
QUESTION OF THE IAF'S REPRESENTATIVES AND POSSIBLE FUNDING
OF THE COOPERATIVES DEVELOPMENT CENTER, AND ON ALL OF THE POINTS
LEFT OPEN DURING THEIR CONVERSATION.

9. PLEASE ADVISE SOONEST AS TO HOW WE HANDLE THIS ONE.
GERARD

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NNN

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